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JOHN RUSSELL....

PLACE: LONDON

DATE: 1820

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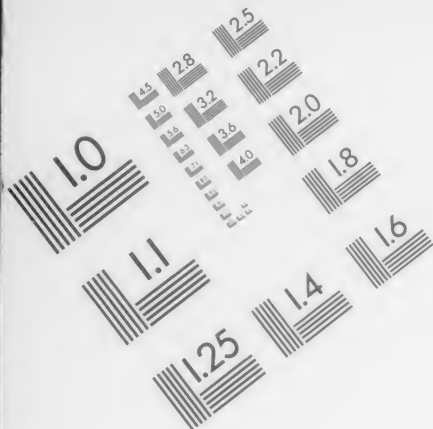
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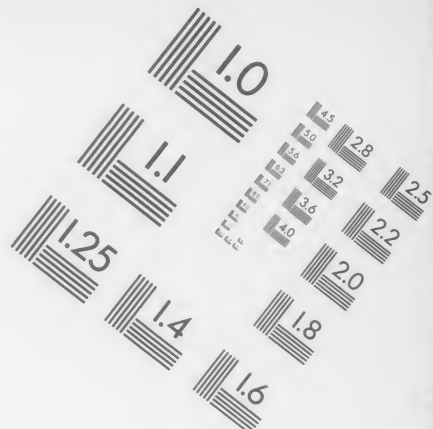
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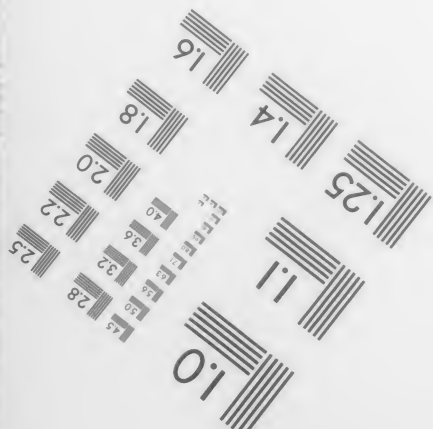
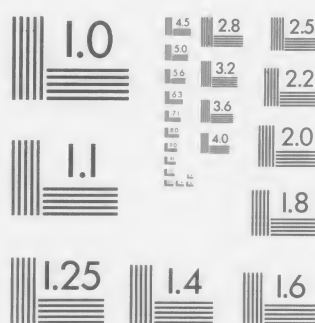
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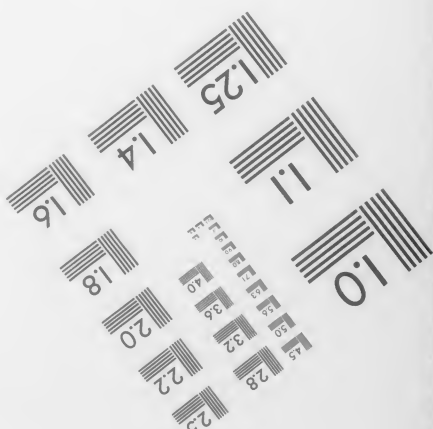
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James Russell

A LETTER
TO
LORD JOHN RUSSELL,
&c.

A
L E T T E R

TO

LORD JOHN RUSSELL,

ON

FRENCH AFFAIRS.

LONDON :

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1820.

LONDON:

Printed by W. CLOWES, Northumberland-court.

A LETTER,

&c.

IN the Letter your Lordship published last spring, you truly stated, "That after having been, for twenty-five years, occupied with foreign politics, we have entirely lost sight of the subject. The extraordinary situation in which the government of France is placed, and the violence of the conflicting parties, have at length aroused the most apathetic, and the people of this country begin to be aware that the repose and security of Europe depend in no small degree on the issue of the present contest. Much credit is due to you for having turned the public attention to the subject, and it is because our eyes are at length opening, that I take the liberty of addressing you this letter. I am also anxious to make some observations upon your own pamphlet, as your opinion, always respectable from your rank, charac-

ter, and talents, derives in this instance additional weight, from being (as it is believed), those of that party to which, without a compliment, your Lordship has added so much lustre.

Although much difference of opinion exists as to the cause, none remains in the mind of any one, of the extremely critical situation in which the Bourbons are placed. In acknowledging last year, that "there was no aristocracy in France, or means of forming one;" in stating that "the love of equality was the distinguishing political passion of a Frenchman;" "*that title and birth were actually nothing in the eyes of the people*;" you seemed not to be wholly blind to those dangers which have increased with fearful rapidity; for it would ill become me to imagine that one of the House of Russell could consider these points as favourable "to the progress of liberty." Still it was impossible to believe, that you really felt much apprehension when you risked the following prophecy.

"In the mean time it is very gratifying to observe
"the progress which the cause of real liberty is
"making in that kingdom. Under the present
"ministry we may expect that the laws still wanting
"to form a free constitution will be passed. That

"some method will be found of preventing the inde-
"finite and vexatious imprisonment which now takes
"place before a prisoner is brought to trial. That a
"man falsely imprisoned will be allowed an easy
"way of obtaining redress. That persons in autho-
"rity may be henceforward accused, without the
"permission of the council of state. That the
"freedom of the press will be granted to the daily
"papers, and trial by jury allowed in cases of libel.
"That juries themselves will be no longer chosen by
"the prefects.

"These and other regulations are required to
"complete a system of personal and political liberty.
"But there is no reason to fear that they will be long
"delayed."

It is curious that the minister of which this was foretold, should have left, as the last record of his administration, the proposal of an establishment of a censorship for five years, and what is equivalent to the suspension of our Habeas Corpus act. I do not deny these measures may be necessary; I only remark the circumstance, as a proof that the habit acquired by your party of false prophecy has not been confined to this country alone.

The career of that minister has been a singular

one. He came into power by being the avowed supporter of the law of elections, which his last act was an attempt to change; his first charge against the royalist government was that they had increased the number of the deputies of that chamber, which his last act was an attempt also to increase. He was the child and the champion of that law which, to use your Lordship's expression, "seemed framed expressly to put power in the hands of those who took part in the Revolution." His subsequent actions were in unison; for, with equal zeal and activity, he persevered in effecting, it is to be feared, nearly a total change in all civil and military offices; in replacing those who were least favourable to the Bourbons; and in recalling, if not restoring to rank and honours, all their most tried and inveterate enemies*.

* If the late minister had wished that the just punishment of Ney's treachery should deserve the name of judicial murder, which the jacobins all over Europe have chosen to affix to it, he could not have taken a better mode than by advising his misguided sovereign to recall and restore to favour those men who had, in proportion to their means, shewed the same hostility to him, and who emulated, if they could not rival, that illustrious victim. Will any one be bold enough to assert that the Prince of Moscowa, if alive, would not now be standing as a marshal of France in the presence of his sovereign?

Alarmed at length at the formidable power and menacing appearance of the machine he had put in motion, and at the gigantic strides with which the revolutionary spirit was spreading over France; aware, but too late, that the maintenance of that law of elections, to which he owed his power, was wholly incompatible with the existence of that monarchy, of which, by his office, he was the supporter, and that they were just verging to an uncontrolled democracy, he determined on making an effort to remedy the evil of which he had been the artificer. As his law was not carried into execution, it is not necessary to enter into the details of his project, but the most important part was, the preservation of the chamber, without any partial dissolution, for five years; an increase of the number of deputies, and some salutary alterations as to the *patentes*.

It would be now equally superfluous to examine whether the royalists* have acted wisely at such a critical moment, in refusing to support measures because they could not place confidence in the man—but it may

* The more moderate royalists, under Villete and Laine, seemed willing to support him; but the violent ultras seemed to forget their country in their hatred of the minister.

be feared that the fury of party hatred which now guides the politics of France, will more than any thing conduce to the overthrow of that government. The minister felt that the fate was approaching him, of all those who, vacillating between conflicting parties, partake of the violence and incur the hatred of both, without gaining the confidence of either; and there is every reason to believe that nearly two months ago he guarded against the disgrace attending the fall of a favourite, by being privately made a duke, and by being proposed as ambassador to this country. He, however, appears to have determined on bringing forward the alteration of the law of election, which he had at length discovered to be indispensable. In this interval an atrocious murder is committed on the person of that prince, whom (exclusive of some personal failings) he and his party had contributed to render as unpopular, as he had unfortunatly become. A public and formal accusation of the most extraordinary nature is brought forward against him. What is the conduct of this "liberal" minister your Lordship eulogizes? Did he adopt the measure which the "anti-liberal" government of this country has recourse to, of examining into the causes of that foul crime which had plunged the Royal Family in mourning, and its friends

in consternation and in grief? Did he wait till he could deliberately trace the extent of its connexion with the revolutionary spirit, which he found at length used daggers as well as spoke them? Did he remain even long enough to vindicate himself from public accusation, and to fall at least with dignity and honour? convinced as he had become of the necessity of altering the election law, did he seek out any conciliating means to render it more palatable? None of all this; *pour dorer la pilule*, he brought forward with all the rash precipitation of fear, two measures, which however necessary they may be, should never have been proposed in such a hasty, imprudent, and unstatesmanlike manner; and then, leaving his sovereign in a situation not to be viewed without equal pity and alarm, he resigned the situation of a minister; but not the power with which he had received it, for, by the effect of his own acts it had passed away.

Happy would it be for Europe, if he could have restored it with the civil and military organization in the same state in which he had found it. It is difficult to speculate on the future, or to say how far the Duc de Richelieu possesses the nerve and decision necessary to meet so critical a position of affairs, entangled as he is by the toils which two years of unremitting

activity has spread over every department ; with those whom he had banished standing, beside him in the council-chamber of his sovereign ; * with an army and a civil administration re-organized, and filled not with his friends or the real supporters of the monarchy ; with a chamber of peers the source of which has been polluted, the power of which has been annihilated ; and with a legislative body which by the influence of his predecessor at first, and by the spirit of the times at last, is fast approaching to a state which, to use the mildest comparison, would be more suited to thirty years ago, than to be wished for at the present moment.

With respect to the death of that Prince which has spread consternation through every loyal part of France, it may, in one point of view, strengthen the Bourbon cause, if it should serve to unite, which earnestly is to be hoped, its different branches into an active and cordial co-operation, for the support of that ancient and illustrious throne, of which one is the possessor and to which the other is the heir. I wish to look a little more in detail into the internal policy of the late government.

* Much may, however, be hoped from the character and exertions of the present minister at war, the late ambassador here ; but it is an Augean stable—we heartily wish him success.

I am aware that this subject is equally difficult and delicate, and I should not have ventured to submit these hasty observations to the public, if I did not feel it to be the imperative duty of every one, however humble his abilities, to assist in the diffusion of truth, on a subject which, from the undue influence excited by the late French minister over the daily press, has been so much misrepresented,—and in which Europe, as well as this country, is vitally concerned.

Let us then examine shortly what has been the conduct of her Government, and let us see, whether the system pursued for two years, has been such as to justify the encomiums which are lavished on it by your Lordship,—and under which party the rational liberty of France, and the repose of Europe are most likely to be preserved.

There may exist a difference of opinion, whether the French people are at this moment qualified to possess a representative government ; whether there exists among them that knowledge of the principles on which real liberty is founded, or that character of moderation ; judgment, and steady perseverance which are necessary to the attainment of that great work, a finished constitution. There are many who

know that country well who are disposed to doubt it; and from the political character which is given them by Madame de Stael, none more than that celebrated writer: There are many who have remarked, in the whole course of their judicial proceedings, in their debates, and their political writings,—the most extraordinary ignorance of the most simple principles of justice, of the most common rules of evidence, of the most ordinary and acknowledged maxims of law: who have observed that the party in power only views the representative system as the temporary means of carrying through their own objects, and as the convenient instrument of their own power, instead of a check upon the executive authority, or as a tribunal to which they were responsible; they have seen, in numerous cases, whenever a point is to be carried, the ministry never stop to inquire whether it may not be in violation of their charter; and the opposition content themselves with complaining of the measure as a grievance which affects themselves, but never oppose it on constitutional grounds or as an infraction of great fundamental principles. Your Lordship, however, considers them in a more favourable point of view. You represent them to be as “eager to possess a free constitution as they were lately enthusiastic for

military glory and foreign dominion.” You express your gratification at the “progress that the cause of real liberty is making through the kingdom; and confidently expect that, under the present ministers, the laws still wanting to form a free constitution will not long be delayed.” You do not leave us in doubt as to what sort of government you conceive is best suited to France, and to which they are now approaching, for the amendments you anticipate are among the most important safeguards of our own liberties. As your views then for the future are for a still nearer approximation to the English constitution, it is but fair to infer that “the progress of real liberty,” which you describe, has been founded on the sound principles which guided the illustrious band of old Whigs, and which, as it is asserted by them, constitute the creed of the modern ones.

Your Lordship has divided France into two parties, “those who love the Revolution, and those who hate it; those who wish to *improve the* “*charter*, and those who wish it never had been “granted.” I am willing to adopt the first part of this classification, and I wish to examine how far the latter is confirmed by facts; which of these two parties

have pursued the most constitutional objects; and whether the alterations and *improvements* which the late ministry (those who love the Revolution) have made in their charter are precisely of that nature as to entitle them to the approbation of the Whigs of this, or the friends of rational liberty, of social order, or of peace in any other country.

Among the principles which led to the establishment of our liberties are—

That the king has no dispensing power.

That no act of any one branch of the legislature can have the force of law; and that if any act was passed, contrary to the most express stipulation of an original charter, and destructive of all security of person and property, that the ministry who carried it through, should be impeached.

What have ever been the objects of the Whigs? A diminution of the influence of the crown in elections, and a fair representation of the people. These are not principles adapted only to our own country, or which can flourish only in our favoured clime, but they constitute the very essence of a representative government. The fitness of the French nation at this moment to enjoy a free constitution may, I repeat,

be doubted; but if your Lordship is right, they must be guided by these principles and no others.

Let us see what have been their acts—

1. A constant exercise of the dispensing power, the annihilation of the constitutional power of one branch of the legislature.

2. The creation of the means of influencing the representation of the people.

3. The recall of the regicides, contrary to the express and repeated resolutions of the whole legislature.

4. The revival of the law of conscription, contrary to the charter and the solemn promise of the King.

If we examine these acts in detail, we shall find the violation of every principle on which liberty can be founded, or the balance of a constitutional government maintained.

The first was proved by the creation of the sixty new peers.

By the original charter of 1814, the king was empowered to make peers for life. By an ordonnance of the 19th of August, 1815, this was revoked, and the peerage was made hereditary. By an ordonnance of the 25th of August, 1817, this was confirmed, and the formation of a majorat was directed to be established. After the preamble has stated the import-

ance of keeping up the dignity of the members of the first body in the state, the ordonnance states that no one hereafter can be called to the peerage who has not, previous to his nomination, obtained the royal permission to establish their majorat, *and if he is not in possession of the same.*

This ordonnance passed through the chamber of deputies by a majority of 119 to 85, and the peers; *and became a law as binding as the charter itself until constitutionally repealed.* Afterwards an ordonnance was issued, *unsanctioned by either house*, dispensing with this law, and creating sixty new peers, of whom none had established the required majorat, and few of whom have the means of ever possessing it. This act was unconstitutional and illegal in every way. Several of these had forfeited their rank from their conduct during the Cent jours, and the ordonnance which dismissed them in July, 1815, was received with the acclamations of both houses. I will not enter into the past life, the private history, or the characters of the individuals thus created, although, if the opinion of Madame de Stael is as true as I believe it to be, "that none of those who participated in the crimes of the Revolution can be useful to France," I should have reason to doubt the degree of

benefit that she will derive from this addition to her peerage. The point I rest on is *this*, that the king could not by a simple ordonnance repeal a law of the whole legislature; that in making peers who had no majorats nor means of forming them, without which they could not be made hereditary, he was, in fact, making peers for life, from which by law he was precluded.

2. The law of elections. By the original charter the number of deputies was fixed at 262. On the king's return in 1815, an ordonnance was issued on the 13th of July, in which, after recapitulating the evils which had arisen from the imperfect representation, and the advantages which would result from one "more numerous and less restrained in the conditions of eligibility," the number was increased to 395. It is clear that the very essence of a representative government is, that neither the sovereign nor any one branch can have the power of increasing or diminishing the representation at pleasure: we see indeed these principles recognised by the ordonnance itself*; and

* The words of the ordonnance that follow are these:—*Mais voulant cependant que dans aucun cas aucune modification de la Charte ne puisse devenir définitive que d'après les formes constitu-*

this act of the king can only be excused by the critical situation in which he was placed at the termination of a second revolution. This measure which, like the assembling of our convention in 1688, has necessity for its excuse, should have received, as in our case, the sanction of law by an act of the whole parliament. The supporters of this measure argued, that sufficient power is vested in the king by the 14th article of the charter to sanction it. Without entering into this question, it is clear that if it was illegal, the acts of that chamber were illegal likewise. On the 5th of September that chamber was dissolved, the ministry was changed, and the late government came into power, for the favorite was the real minister. Were the acts of the former chamber declared illegal? was the constitutional principle recognised by the former ordonnance, acted upon by these more enlightened legislators? On the contrary!

tionnelles, les dispositions de la présente ordonnance seront le premier objet des délibérations des Chambres. Le pouvoir législatif dans son ensemble statuera sur la loi des élections, sur les changemens à faire à la Charte, changemens dont nous ne prenons ici j'initiative que dans les points les plus indispensables et les plus urgens, en nous imposant même l'obligation de nous rapprocher autant que possible de la Charte, et des formes précédemment en usage.'

they immediately practised what they had blamed in their predecessors, by altering the law of elections by an ordonnance also. Your Lordship states, that those who love the revolution (always meaning the late ministry) wish to improve the charter. Let us look at the preamble of the first act of this reforming administration; of this act which, you say, saved France from a civil war* :—'Depuis notre retour dans nos états chaque jour nous a démontré cette vérité proclamée par nous dans une occasion solennelle, qu'à côté de l'avantage d'améliorer est le danger d'innover, et nous avons en conséquence jugé nécessaire de

* I must ask the noble lord, what appearance of civil war there was at that moment, and whether the presence of 150,000 foreigners, who were supposed by their enemies to be waiting anxiously for a pretext to interfere, was a propitious circumstance. Under what grievance did one party labour, and what oppression did the other exercise, which were removed or mitigated by that order? It declared that some articles of the charter should be revised, which, in the preceding year, their predecessors had submitted for revision. The increase of the representation could hardly have been a valid reason for a civil war, nor could the substitution of the gravity of forty for the inexperience of twenty-five have conferred such a blessing on the rising generation as to make them sheath their half-drawn weapons. It is rather singular, however, that those who love the revolution should have judged it expedient to select those who had been born before that glorious æra as their legislators.

réduire la chambre des députés au nombre déterminé par la Charte et de n'y appeler que les hommes de 40 ans."

But Monsieur de Caze has argued that an ordinance of the king is legal in reverting to the original charter, though not in departing from it. It may certainly be wise to revert to old institutions, when, under their influence, social order, virtue, religion, and tranquillity, have been maintained, but it is surely a singular class of reform, and a strange act of policy, to rebuild on the same plan and subject to the same accidents, the mine which had just exploded.

But it was not long before the new government did innovate by the law of elections of the 5th of February, 1819; and we wish to examine whether this is precisely such an improvement as deserves the approbation of such an understanding and such principles as your Lordship possesses.

It is perhaps impossible to define which may be the system best qualified to ensure a fair representation of national opinion, but an exclusive one must be the most unjust and the most mischievous of all. You admit that this law seems to "have been framed for the express purpose of putting power into the hands of those who took part in the revolution," or you might

have said, "those who shared in its plunder." It is difficult, without more information than I possess, to class accurately the different parties* in France; but I should say that the royalists, (we include in this term not only those who are attached to the Bourbon cause, but those who wish well to the monarchy as likely to afford them greater tranquillity,) constitute the majority of the French people, but they are principally agriculturists, dispersed over a vast extent of country, and possessing neither the active talents, the union, nor the turbulent qualities of the inhabitants of the towns. Although you may not believe to the extent I do, the number of the royalists in France, you will not deny that in many departments there exists no other feeling but the most devoted attachment to the Bourbons, and there cannot be brought a stronger proof of the little sympathy that now exists between the constituent and representative bodies,

* The present chamber is nearly composed thus:—About 50 old droite decided royalists, with Villèle at their head; about 50 of the ministerials, who shrink from the late minister's measures, and might vote with the latter, headed by Lainé; about 70 of the gauche, with democratic feelings; about 40 called petite gauche, with a tendency to the latter, and about 40 of the centre, which may vote either way.

than in citing the organs of the political opinions of the loyal La Vendée. Not only, however, does the French law of elections professedly exclude a large part of the community from any participation in its privileges, but it is framed so as to place a vast and uncontrolled power in the hands of the government, by the right of voting being extended to the *patentes*.

The right of voting in France, is confined to those who pay 300 francs a-year in direct taxes. The contribution-foncière*, on which it is raised, is about one-seventh of the income, you put it at one-fifth. Now this measure of the people's ability to elect cannot be founded on the sum which the government receives, but upon the property on which it is the tax and of which it is the index ; but it has been in-

* One of the best-informed Frenchmen in the state of his own country and an ultra-liberal, Le Comte Lanjuinais, in his book on the French Constitution, states, vol. i. p. 225.

" Il y a des départemens où il ne se trouve pas cent cinquante ni cent. ni même *dix citoyens*, payant 300 francs de contributions directes, et pas un seul, ou à peine un ou deux, qui paient 1,000 francs." When we consider that these few electors are principally acquéreurs des biens nationaux, that this law excludes all influence of property, and all the right of the small farmers and agricultural population, we shall be enabled to form a tolerably correct opinion of the fairness of the present election laws.

terpreted to mean, by the supporters of the present system, that any person who pays the 300 francs in contributions directes, shall be entitled to vote, whether it is a tax on property or not. I really do not see, by a parity of reasoning, why any person who paid 300 francs into the treasury, should not have a vote, for it would be equally a contribution. By this interpretation *les patentes* are included, and as this subject may not be generally understood in this country, I must enter into a short explanation of it. One of the most oppressive taxes in France is one imposed by Buonaparte on trade and professions, which is realizing in finance the fable of the goose and golden eggs, in exacting a share of the profits before the means are granted or time afforded, by which alone they can be acquired. As the tax on *patentes* is 300 francs a year, the holders of them are entitled to vote, and as there exists no obligation to follow a trade any person may obtain them*. These *patentes* are given

* This was denied by the ministry in one of the debates of last year, when it was strenuously asserted by M. de Villele. A M. de Guillelm (we believe a general) supported the government, but in his speech admitted that, not having a sufficient property to vote, he had purchased a *patente d'arpenteur*, in right of which he actually had voted in the last election. In the projected alterations of the

at the will of the government and their préfets, who in many cases have been held responsible for the return of particular individuals. In all cases the préfet decides on the validity of votes, and *I could cite instances* where, in departments supposed favourable, considerable numbers have been added, and many taken away from others where the royalist feeling was supposed to be predominant. The rejected votes can only establish their rights by an appeal to the Cours Royales or the Conseil d'Etat, and it is easy to imagine what chance of redress exists when their opponents are both parties and judges. The royalists affirm, and I believe with truth, though contradicted by the ministry, that not only the patentes give a vote, but that a monthly instalment of twenty-five francs has, in some instances, been deemed a qualification.

Such however is the law of elections, and such are the *improvements* in the charter of French liberty, which, strange to say, have found an advocate in one of the ornaments of the Whig aristocracy of this country.

election, it was intended to confine these votes to those who had *bonâ fide* exercised their profession or trade for some time.

3. The recall of the Regicides.

The petitions for the recall of the * Bannis being numerous, they were referred to a committee in the Deputies, and a report was ordered to be made. The committee consisted of nine, and five were against their return. On M. Cotton, the reporter, bringing the report into the house, M. Desserres, garde des sceaux, made his celebrated speech, which ended "pour les Régicides jamais." The question was called for, and their exclusion confirmed again by an immense majority. It is not necessary to enter into the intrigues which attended this event, but in a few days, in defiance of all law, four of the regicides and five of the exiles were actually recalled; and, with difficulty, France was spared the unutterable shame of seeing one of the former (L'Abbé Gregoire) setting in the midst of her representative assembly.

But it may be said, that these remarks only apply to the character of the French government, as relating to their own internal situation, and are matters, therefore, more of curious speculation than of im-

* The regicides were banished by a law of the King and the two Chambers; the exiles by an ordonnance alone. The King could therefore recall the latter, but not the former, except by an act of the whole legislature.

portance to us; but we must now examine the other acts of that party, not as citizens of the world, but as Englishmen, whose interests are vitally affected. There can be but one opinion that peace is essentially necessary to the welfare of this country, and the re-establishment of our finances; and we must therefore appreciate the conduct of other governments as connected with ourselves, in proportion to the desire they shew by their acts, as well as their language, of perpetuating and securing it. Do the acts of the late government, besides the revival of the conscription, to which I shall presently advert, wear a very pacific aspect? Does the total exclusion of the Royalists from every office, civil as well as military, and the removal of those who were employed; the appointment of the most zealous partisans of the system formed by Buonaparte, to the commands of every important fortress from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, and the re-organization of the army by the removal of all those (to use the words of your Lordship) "who HAVE BEEN ALWAYS STEADY TO HIM, (the King) AND WHO IN VAIN URGE THAT THEY ARE THE ONLY MEN WHO HAVE NOT BETRAYED THEIR DUTY AND VIOLATED THEIR OATHS; AND THAT, WHILE THEIR ADVERSARIES ARE LEADING THEIR KING

TO HIS RUIN, THEY ARE THE ANCIENT FOLLOWERS OF HIS HOUSE, AND HAVE LOST THEIR FORTUNES AND SHED THEIR BLOOD TO MAINTAIN HIS RIGHTS;" and now find those services registered as records against them, whilst the consummation of treachery and rebellion, exhibited on Mount St. Jean, constitutes the surest and most acknowledged claim to promotion, employment, and rewards. I could fill a folio with instances of this feeling; a few will suffice. The facts are sufficiently known in France without exposing the names of the individuals.

A sous-préfet of a department in the south of France was last year removed, and he came to Paris to complain. On waiting on one of the ministers, he was asked, if his conscience did not tell him the cause. His answer was, "No, that he had always done his duty with loyalty, firmness, and moderation since les cent jours."—"But in les cent jours?" said the minister.—"There you know my conduct was most marked. It was I who cut the telegraphic communication from Paris, and so much assisted the Duc d'Angoulême." The answer was nearly in these words—"Mais c'est précisément pour cela—vous êtes la cause que les François s'armèrent contre les François."

There is another instance of a colonel who commanded a regiment, the officers of which held such seditious language, that he was obliged to inform them, that though he did not wish to interfere with their political opinions, he should be obliged to put them under arrest, if they permitted themselves such an expression of them. They persisted, and he kept his word. The deserving officer received a letter in consequence from the minister at war, saying, that his severity had produced so much harm, that he ought to have been dismissed, but that, from the extreme indulgence of the king, he was removed to another regiment.

What has, on the contrary, been the conduct of the reprobated royalists, whose influence I wish to see restored, not from any belief that they would in their hearts be friendly to England, or that they would be devoid of ambitious intentions, but that their own interest commands them at present to maintain peace, whilst the security of the others is founded on the employment of those whom I must call the artificers of all the evils which have desolated Europe? The Royalists have steadily and vehemently opposed the revival of the conscription, yet they are termed sanguinary; they have opposed three violent infractions of the charter, the prostitution

of the aristocracy, the exclusive law of elections, the recall of the regicides; they have supported the liberty of the press, they have attempted to diminish the influence of the police, but still they are branded by the noble Lord as possessing a general abhorrence to the friends of liberty all over the world. In saying this I do not mean to deny, that some of the violent members of that party, called by their enemies *les Jacobins blancs*, by imprudent language in 1815 gave reason for France to suspect their intentions; but we must not form our opinions by the language of some salons in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, where there may exist a few courtiers, who, blindly bigoted to their ancient institutions would remount the torrent which overwhelmed them, but on the public acts and the conduct which I have described, and which stands recorded in their journals.

Your Lordship compares the conduct of Louis XVIII. with that of Henry IV. I cannot find in the history of France after the conversion, (which, for the honour of that great sovereign who was "*Royaliste par cœur*" as well as "*par profession*," I believe to have been sincere, and although producing great political advantages, not arising from political

motives or worldly interests alone) I have yet to find that Henry IV., at once discarded Sully from his presence, that he formed his council from the Guises, that he gave the command of his fortresses to the chiefs of the League, that he appointed to his army in preference those who fought against him at Ivry, and that he removed his old and faithful servants from every office and every command. Sully says on the contrary, 'that his object was to permit no faction to be able to say that they disposed of his power, and that although he was reconciled with his former enemies, he never diminished his aversion for the spirit and principles which guided them.'—Admitting that the present sovereign professes all the good intentions of his great predecessor and the same love for his people, I fear that his wishes of conciliating all parties have not been crowned with equal success. Henry was surrounded by a high-spirited, gallant, generous, and powerful nobility: the present aristocracy of France has been humbled by the sovereign, and the influence of property, the defensive principle of which, as Mr. Burke expresses it, becomes weakened by diffusion, has been annihilated by law,—and he has alienated from him the ancient followers of his house. It may be feared the army will

not forgive him as the punisher of treason, nor the jacobins forget that he is the descendant of the Capets.

I now come to the most important feature of the late minister's administration; the revival of the law of conscription, a law as incompatible with the security of Europe as it is destructive of every principle of personal security, without which, a charter is waste-paper, and liberty a name. This however, was the work of that minister under whose government your Lordship says, 'it is very gratifying to observe the progress which real liberty is making in that kingdom.' Here I cannot refrain from expressing my astonishment at the calmness with which those important changes in France have been viewed by all parties in this country; a fact which I attribute, in no small degree, to the influence possessed by certain of the French ministry over those public papers which principally direct the opinion of the public. The allied powers seem to have been equally passive; they had seen the law of the 5th of September in direct violation of the charter; they had seen the partial law of election, the revival and the enforcement of the conscription; they must have known of the increasing feeling of disaffection, and the prevalence of republican principles; that at Lyons twelve communes sounded the tocsin

and shouted 'Vive l'Empereur;' they must have been aware of the recall of the exiles, of the alterations in the guard, of the care taken to jacobinize the army, of the dismissal of Monsieur from the command of the national guard, of the removal of every royalist from the highest prefect to the lowest clerk in office; they must have heard of the persecution of the royalists for a conspiracy, confessed afterwards by the ministry themselves, never to have existed: but in spite of all these momentous warnings they affix their signatures to a declaration that the tranquillity of France is secured*.

* It is too late now to discuss the policy of that important measure, which received the silent acquiescence of both Houses of Parliament, the evacuation of the French territory. This measure is so intimately connected with the important changes which have since taken place in France, and so powerfully influences the great question of the durability of the present peace, that it deserves more consideration than has generally been attached to it, or at least than it has publicly received from the statesmen of England.

If the army of occupation had been placed in France for the sole purpose of maintaining on the throne of that country a dynasty which was from interest pacific, and was bound by so many ties to this country; the wishes of that sovereign, and the opinion of that people should have been justly considered as the rule of our conduct; and although we might doubt the policy of the measure, although we might deeply lament the decision, we should have had no right to remonstrate or to complain. But it was not, as the noble Lord asserts, to guarantee the permanency

At last, however, the dismissal of the Duc de Richelieu, before the ink of the treaties was well dry,

of the internal institutions of France, nor to impose a dynasty on France in case of another revolutionary struggle: it was placed there, undoubtedly, as a temporary security to the sovereign until an army more faithful than the last could be organized in his favour; but its main object was the security of that country which is the bulwark of Europe, and the key-stone of the great arch of her security: it was placed there to interpose a wall of steel against the ambition of France till a wall of stone could be erected, and to allow time for those two nations so lately united, "like kindred drops to mingle into one."

Those, therefore, who approve of that measure, must fall under one of these descriptions. They must believe that in 1815 there existed no feelings in the French nation which could threaten the peace and security of others, and that consequently the temporary occupation was wholly unnecessary; or they must conceive, that since that period such a change has taken place as to confer that security which did not previously exist; or they must be those who, believing that sufficient reasons did exist to render necessary those previous precautions, and acknowledging that no sufficient change has taken place to replace that security of which we are now deprived, are nevertheless of opinion, that as it could not be intended to maintain to perpetuity the occupation of her territory, it would be only increasing her irritation, aggravating her sufferings, and animating her desire of vengeance; that the small remaining term of the occupation could not be expected to add great solidity to the newly-connected powers, and that it was the wisest policy in the Allies to enhance the boon by the manner of conferring it.

It is hardly necessary to confute the first. The experience of 1814 was sufficient to convince every one of the necessity of further securities, unless indeed those blind and narrow-minded

and the violent measure of making sixty new peers, opened the eyes of the most incredulous. Any one who

politicians who would renounce those magnanimous views of policy, and that zeal and generous interest for the safety of Europe which have rescued both herself and us, which produced the splendour of the late victories, and the consummation of the present peace. As to the second, let us examine what change has taken place sufficient to authorize the measure. When the army was first placed in France, the fortresses were not begun, and now they are not finished. Those few that are completed in a builder's sense, want the 'materiel' of war essential to their defence. Besides, in measuring the force of a chain, we calculate from the weakness of one link, not from the strength of many. But what will be said of the strength of that chain where the main link is defective? Such is the state of Mons, the key of the Low Countries, which, from the difficulties inseparable from its size and construction, as it is built upon piles, at an enormous expense, cannot be finished in less than two years from the present time.

Some improvement perhaps has taken place in the internal state of Belgium and Holland; and we might confidently have looked forward to the period when, connected as they are with the Prussian acquisitions, they would have become sufficient to their own defence, with the assistance which England could easily supply: but the consolidation has not had time to become complete, and no one who has visited that country can affirm that that auspicious period *has yet* arrived. Is then the required security derived from any favourable change in the dispositions of the French people, in their having ceased to be ambitious, in their having reduced their establishments so low as to be unable to become the aggressors? Did we see any thing in the internal state of that country, in the temper of her people, in the tone of her society, in the language of her press, in the public

reasoned from causes to effects might long have anticipated all that has since happened. I date the evil

acts of her government to authorize that belief? Much stress has been laid on the pacific character and virtues of their sovereign—much on the moderation of his councils, equally removed from ultra-royalism on the one hand, and republicanism on the other; much on the general wish for tranquillity which exists in the most numerous, but unfortunately the least active or united class, her agricultural population; much on the public attention having been weaned from war and turned more to commercial pursuits and the acquisition of money, than to foreign aggression; much on the dilapidated state of her finances pressed down by so long a war, and the enormous sacrifices she has of late years been called upon to make; but IF ALL THIS WAS TRUE, where is the security for Europe, whilst in her heart exists a state, in which, contrary to the charter, in violation of the express promise of the sovereign, in mockery of every pacific principle, and in defiance of the feelings of the people, that bloody law of conscription has been revived and acted upon in a moment of the profoundest peace; and in which the peace establishment has been fixed at 240,000 men, a much greater force than she possessed in the zenith of her glory, and under the most ambitious of her legitimate sovereigns; an army not only formidable from its numerical strength, but tremendous from the mode of its organization,—by which in a few weeks 200,000 men might be added to its standards. Assuming, therefore, for argument's sake, that there is a decided wish in the French government and people to maintain peace, can we calculate on their being able to resist the impulse of that powerful and restless body the old army, which might well be termed the Prætorian bands of France? At the same time that I wish to give full credit to the pacific disposition and the virtues of their sovereign, is there no example in history, of the most peaceful mo-

much earlier, and, as I have said before, from the moment that the allied powers permitted the conscription to be re-established and consented to the reduction of one third of the army of observation, the rest fol-

narchs, when they saw a storm brewing at home, seeking to direct its fury to a foreign war; or, in the words of our Henry IV., 'to busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels, that action thence borne out, may waste the memory of the former days.' Would not the re-annexation of Belgium be a peace-offering to France for all she had suffered, and would it not make every Frenchman rally round the throne to support the aggression? The character, however, of her people is not altered,—whatever temporary exhaustion or lassitude may restrain them, the main national principle, whether under a Buonaparte or a Bourbon, is military glory and an extension of the empire. Is it probable that these feelings are weakened by their losses, and their late humiliations—are they not, on the contrary, more likely to be inflamed by wounded pride and animated by revenge? Where then is the security, that this very year Belgium does not again fall into the hands of France? I will not prophesy that this will happen, but I maintain that we had no right to lay such a tempting bait within her reach; we were not justified in trying so hazardous an experiment as the power of her self-denial; for to place a kingdom within the grasp of dormant ambition is like putting a penitent drunkard in your wine-cellar, or a domesticated fox in your poultry-yard. I do not say this in hostility to France. I wish to see her employed in cultivating her own goodly fields instead of ravaging the harvests of others,—I wish to see her reforming the morals, and ameliorating the situation of her own people, instead of spreading principles more pernicious than her sword into the heart of her neighbours; and if I could believe that the evacuation of France was consistent with the security of Europe, I should rejoice in it for her sake.

lowed of course. Europe had a right then to have interfered, and she had the means of checking the evil in its bud. I trust that she will not have bitter cause to lament that the opportunity has passed away; and that she may not be compelled with all the efforts of her strength to eradicate the evil she might have remedied by a word.

If such is the state to which France has been brought, by a series of measures which have long spread alarm in the minds of those who have watched the career of the French Government, it becomes necessary to say a few words on the question of interference; for your Lordship states, "that we are bound to interfere in the internal concerns of every state of Europe; that meetings of the sovereigns are to be held at intervals, in order to watch over the security of those *transactions* upon which the peace is founded and consolidated; and that, should any of the provinces which have fallen under the sway of legitimate monarchs attempt * to improve the form of

* The noble Lord admits the spirit of the times is such, that no war could be carried on in Europe without becoming revolutionary. Has there ever existed any conspiracy, from Wat Tyler to the murder of our ministers, which was not declared to be a revolt against the abuses of power? And if we were to be

their government or revolt against the abuses of power, there can be no doubt that the amphictyonic council of sovereigns would take cognizance of the offence."

I distinctly deny that we are bound to interfere in the internal government of any state, or that we have ever interfered, except when changes have taken place inconsistent with the maintenance of our own security, or incompatible with the preservation of peace. If there is a principle of the law of nations more distinctly laid down than any other, and at the same time more in unison with the practice of social life and the decisions of law, it is the right of interference. Vattel, having first established the principle that every nation has a right to govern itself in its own way, as long as it is not endangering its neighbours, without which there can exist no national independence, proceeds to state that 'if there is any where a nation of a restless and mischievous disposi-

precluded from adverting to any violence which wore the mask and assumed the title of reform, there is no revolution which might not take place with impunity—there is no crime which would not shelter itself from the sword of the law under the garb of some Roman virtue, till anarchy would revel over the ruins of monarchy, religion, and liberty.

tion, always ready to injure others, to traverse their designs or to raise domestic troubles, it is not to be doubted that all have a right to join, in order to repress, chastise, *and put it ever after out of its power to injure them.*' The law of nations in this case is the same as the private right of any individual, who is empowered to enforce the abolition or removal of any general nuisance by which his health, safety, or property are endangered; but the law does not permit him to scrutinize into the domestic life of his neighbours, to inquire whether they are good husbands, kind masters, or affectionate parents, or to sally forth in the world as the quixotic redresser of the wrongs of others. It was by the sanction of this first and paramount law of nations and individuals, and by a just regard to our own safety, that we were authorized in declaring that the existence of Buonaparte as sovereign of France could not be permitted; and that as long as he persevered in holding a station incompatible with the security of Europe, he was out of the pale of nations. There has since occurred an event which afforded us an equal right to have interfered—the re-establishment of the conscription in that country, in the middle of the profoundest peace. I will say more; I do not comprehend on what prin-

ciple the Allies could have interfered in the one case, and have permitted so flagrant a departure from all the principles of peace to pass unnoticed in the other.

By the argument which your Lordship has made use of, the Allies have been additionally criminal in having looked on in silence at the adoption of that fearful measure to the repose of Europe, for they have abandoned the line of conduct pointed out by their own treaties. You explain the word '*transactions*' to mean the 'possession by the Bourbons of the throne of France, and the maintenance of the charter.' The leading article in that charter is the abolition for ever of this tyrannical and bloody law. At the same time, therefore, that you declare that the Allied Sovereigns are *bound by* treaty to interfere, and express your belief that '*they would take cognisance of the offence*, you proceed to prove that although the most important changes have taken place in France; although events have occurred in positive violation of those treaties (as you explain them), and which are rapidly restoring the character, materials, and conduct of Revolutionary France, that still Europe has not interfered. It seems to us, that if you had wished to confute your own arguments by that ingenious mode of the deduction ad absurdum, you

could not have adopted a more satisfactory mode. In this, however, you have only imitated the consistency of your party on the subject of interference.

I have never been able to account for the wonderful popularity of Buonaparte among a certain class of politicians in this country, (it is to be hoped, for the honour of England, confined to a few,) how a military despot, who despised the voice of the people, who abhorred the very name of liberty, and whose whole career was in direct violation of all the avowed principles of the Whigs, should find advocates among them; unless, indeed, as Mr. Burke expresses it, that '*our ideas of justice appear to be fairly conquered and overpowered by guilt when it is grown gigantic*. When this meek and pious prince wielded his pacific sceptre, then with one voice the Whigs declared against any unjust and odious interference,—although the salvation of Europe depended on the decision of the British Parliament. Your Lordship admits that the conquests of Buonaparte have scattered in every country the seeds of revolution; and when the period is now arrived when these seeds are stretching forth the withering and poisonous tendrils of their rank luxuriance, when the most atrocious crimes, the legitimate offspring of these principles, are spread-

ing consternation throughout Europe; should this lead to a revolutionary struggle which left us no alternative but resistance; should then the intelligent, moderate, and loyal of this country unite their voices with the opinion of the legislature, and the duty of the government, to protect us from such perilous contact, we should then hear of nothing but the wickedness of interference.

But if there existed a sanguinary war between Spain and her colonies; if there were found, to the disgrace of human nature, a sovereign who rewarded his most faithful servants, and his most enlightened subjects with degradation and imprisonment, the cry was then, Why do not you interfere? although it would have been as contrary to the law of nations in that case as it is sanctioned by it in the former instance. We are bound to interpose our mediation for the first,—it is our duty to employ our good offices and all the pacific weight of our influence, to balance the conflicting interests in Spain*; but we cannot, con-

* The late change in that country, would require a volume instead of a note. It is to be hoped that the influence of property, which was rendered null by the occupation of Spain by the French, will re-assume its due weight in the next Cortes, and that the constitution will receive these necessary alterations; without which, instead of a limited monarchy, it will be a republic, with the effigy of a king.

sistently with the faith of treaties, or the law of nations, pass those limits. The acts which were passed the session before last to support and perfect our neutrality, by placing the Spanish colonies in the same situation as Spain, and by precluding both equally from drawing from our bosom the food of their merciless conflict, and from making our gallant army the partakers of its atrocity, its imitators, or its victims, have been loudly censured by the enemies of interference.

Your Lordship further remarks, on this subject, “ that in old times the great object of the whole balance was to preserve the weaker states in the full and free enjoyment of their civil and political rights against external attack—internal institutions never entered into its composition—so far otherwise, the greatest internal changes were continually going on during its formation and growth into system, without any endeavour on the part of the sovereigns as such to oppose them.” If you will refer to the treaty of the Triple Alliance, signed at the Hague in 1717, between France, England and Holland, you will find an express stipulation, “ that if the kingdom or provinces of the contracting powers are disturbed by intestine quarrels, or by rebellion on account of the *said successions*, or *under any other pretext whatever*,

the ally thus in trouble shall have the right to demand of his allies the succours specified in another article, viz. 10,000 men, from either of the two former, and 5,000 from the latter state."

The right of interference must be founded on general principles, and must be equally applicable to all times and to all circumstances, but can never depend on the abstract question of the merits of the government of another country; for who is to be judge between independent nations? The broad principle I lay down has already been stated, that self-defence, general security and tranquillity are the only just grounds of interference, and the Triple Alliance is sanctioned by this. Let us see what must have been the language of any statesmen of those days, who had adopted, relative to that treaty, the arguments of the present opposition. Those in France would have said that they had, from the best information, the important fact, that the mass of the common people was for the old family, that the great men who guided our revolution were* "an oligarchy on which

* Is the noble Lord aware that he has adopted precisely the terms by which the followers of the "Creed of Philosophy," the Radical Reformers of Cato Street, designate the old aristocracy of England? *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.*

the administration was dependent, who by their high birth, numerous connexions, and artful cabals, had rendered themselves masters of the throne and of the monarch;" that they were informed the greatest difference of opinion existed among themselves, and that the most important points had been carried by the smallest majorities,—and they would have stigmatized an armed interference as a wicked and unconstitutional attempt "to enforce a new dynasty on the people."

If the present opposition had then existed in England, they would have recapitulated all the cruelties and atrocities of the reign of Louis XIV.; would have given the most moving examples, of the misery, hunger, and disaffection of the lower classes, of the despotism of the whole system, of the vices, and shameless profligacy of the Duke of Orleans; they would have proved that a people, so oppressed, "must revolt against the abuses of power, and attempt to improve their form of government;" and they would have held up the Whig treaty as an infamous conspiracy against the liberties of the French people—they would have said that England "had become the tool and follower of the continental monarchs, instead of being the friend of right, and patron of liberal constitutions."

But if your Lordship has formed a most erroneous opinion of the constitutional merits of the French ministry, you seem to me to have still more thoroughly mistaken the character of the nation. You state "that the love of equality is the distinguishing political passion of a Frenchman; that this feeling enters into the details of common life, and gives a roughness to their character which seems to mark them for Republicans."

Let us see what were the opinions of that distinguished foreigner, Madame de Stael, whom your Lordship praises with much truth and justice; and I will content myself with quoting her words—She is speaking of the present state of society, without reference to any party.

"En Angleterre le parti de l'opposition est souvent mieux reçu en société que celui de la cour—en France on s'informe, pour inviter quelqu'un à dîner s'il est en faveur auprès des ministres, et dans un temps de famine on pourrait bien refuser du pain aux hommes en disgrâce."

"Les hommes formés par Buonaparte" (the mass of the nation) "ont toutes les passions de la révolution, et toutes les vanités de l'ancien régime."

"Le premier article des droits de l'homme en

France c'est la nécessité pour tout François d'exercer un emploi public."

"Se publie un livre sur la politique? avez vous de la peine à le comprendre? traduisez-le par ces paroles: je veux être ministre, et toutes les obscurités vous seront expliquées."

"Le lendemain de la chute de Buonaparte" (the first dawn of constitutional liberty) "il n'y avoit d'actif en France que Paris et à Paris que quelque milliers de solliciteurs demandant de l'argent et des places au gouvernement, quel qu'il pût être."

Nothing can add to the strength of this picture, though the same opinions are expressed in a hundred other places in her works, and it would be easy to cite ample proofs that it is not the love of equality, but the love of effect, which is the distinguishing political passion of a Frenchman.

I do not apprehend that your Lordship is more correct in your views of the benefits of the revolution. You say, "Before the revolution the finances were in the most dilapidated state, and the taxes paid by the people such as to reduce them to the lowest state of wretchedness." * * * "at present a rich and happy population lives upon estates which formerly produced

only beggars * * * * the corvée, the taille, the gabelle, and the tithes have disappeared, &c.

The population of France, before the Revolution, was estimated by M. Necker, at 26,000,000, and the taxes raised on them at about 600,000,000. The present population is not estimated at above 28,000,000, and the public burthens, since the withdrawal of the allied troops and exclusive of temporary charges, amount to 900,000,000 or one half more. By the late exposé of the French ministry, it is not pretended that their trade has increased; they have lost St. Domingo, which produced above one half of their total imports, and consumed nearly the same proportion of their exports. It must be, therefore, on the land and the agriculturist that this increased pressure has fallen. I will not enter at length into agricultural details, or on the acknowledged advantage of capital. It must be apparent to every one, that if the whole land of a country was equally divided by an agrarian law among its population, that universal distress, ruin and famine would be the consequence. The nearer that state a country approaches by the constant subdivision of property equally among the children, the more hard will be the condition of its

peasantry. I do not mean to assert that France has yet attained this situation, but the evils of the present system must increase in such accelerated ratio, that unless remedied by legislative interference, in less than two generations, it will produce universal misery; as it is, the general fertility and cultivation of that country, and that vast expanse of corn which strikes the traveller, are not proofs of a rich or happy population. The small independent proprietors, frequently without capital enough to employ a plough to prepare their field, or a waggon to remove their produce, are scarcely enabled by the labour of themselves and their families to raise adequate subsistence in an average season; but when a bad harvest occurs they have no resource, they have no means of obtaining parochial relief; the great proprietors can no longer open their castle-gates to relieve them, for the Revolution has laid them prostrate, and the accumulation of property is prevented by law; the clergy who were once "in possession of great estates and immense convent lands," can no longer practise the charity they preach, for they are little better than paupers themselves. In the towns the poor may gain an eleemosynary subsistence, but in the country they have no resource but the precarious bounty

of travellers. In the bad year of 1816, it is well known that in many of the departments persons perished of hunger, and many were driven to glean their scanty sustenance from the herbs of the fields. It is not the Emperor Alexander only who, in visiting this country, has been so struck with the general air of comfort and care, as to ask '*ou donc sont vos pauvres ?*' There is no traveller, who, in passing through the departments of France, does not feel himself tempted to ask '*ou donc sont vos riches ?*' But it is said the odious imposts of the ancien régime have ceased. Their names, it is true, are changed, but in the contribution foncière we shall find la taille and 20^{me} united, but more heavy, it being now nearly one-fifth of the income. La gabelle is to be found in the present salt duties, as onerous in fact, and as vexatious in collection. There are besides *les droits réunis*, or a combination of the excise and assessed taxes, and which presses particularly on the lower classes in tobacco and other necessities; *les droits des patentes*, *les octrois municipaux*, or duties of entry and sortie in every town, applicable to the same purposes as our county rates, and which press severely on the farmers, who, if they fail in getting their price for their cattle or flocks, are exposed to its repeated payment, on every market-day; and, though

last not least, that heavy tax on labour, the Conscription, the weight of which can be best estimated by the fact, that within a few months as much as 1,500 francs have been paid for a substitute,—all these are omitted in your Lordship's calculation. I confess it was not without surprise that I saw the abolition of tithes included among the blessings of the Revolution. If your Lordship had witnessed personally the lamentable poverty of that respectable class, the parochial clergy of France, the little respectability they are in consequence enabled to keep up, and the unavoidable bad consequences to the interests of religion and morality, I think you would have formed a different opinion; but at any rate I must express a hope that it is one of those improvements only fitted for our more virtuous neighbours, and that your Lordship, in your legislative capacity will not attempt to confer it on your own country.

I cannot conclude these few remarks, without adverting to the sweeping passage with which your Lordship concluded your Letter.

"He who has read the foregoing pages cannot be at a loss to discover the causes of the unpopularity of England on the Continent. It was supposed that she was the friend of right and the patron of

that liberal constitution which has been the foundation of her own glory. Instead of this she has been the follower and the tool of the great continental monarchs, assisting their spoliations and confirming their destruction of free governments; violating promises solemnly given, and conditions offered in the full plenitude of success; pursuing her course totally regardless of the cries and supplications of the people of Europe; and after this she has joined the same monarchs in their profanation of the names of religion and morality, whose precepts they have never consulted."—(Does the Noble Lord mean the holy alliance, to which we are not a party, or what else can he mean?)—"It will be said, perhaps, that England was not able, by herself, to protect the rights and independence of nations; but if so, in God's name why did she interfere, why is the name of the English minister to be affixed to every act of injustice and tyranny which is performed in Europe—what deadly enemy to England's honourable reputation persuaded Lord Castlereagh that the repose of the world depended on the slavery of Saxony and Genoa?"

Should all this bill of complaint against the European powers be true, I should answer your Lordship

by asking you your own question—Why is the name of the English minister to be affixed to all this? what deadly enemies to the reputation of their own country have been attempting to persuade Europe, that the slavery of Saxony and Genoa depended upon Lord Castlereagh?

But it is not by the conduct we *have* pursued that England has merited such opprobrious epithets, but it would have been by the line which the friends of your Lordship recommended. If after we had given our right hand and pledged our faith to Spain, we had "abandoned the conditions offered in the plenitude of success;" if when Prussia was heaving in agony under the load of Buonaparte's oppression; if when Austria was panting for an opportunity to draw the sword she had unwillingly sheathed; if we had then believed the gloomy prophecies and followed the narrow-minded selfish policy recommended by the Opposition, we should then indeed have verified your words, and have pursued a course equally ruinous and dishonourable; "totally regardless of the cries and supplications of Europe," we should then, by our criminal indifference, have become "the tool of the most dangerous of the European powers;" we should then, indeed, have tacitly "assisted in his spoliations

and confirmed the destruction which he meditated of the freedom of the world."

The unpopularity of England on the continent cannot be denied; but it may be considered as an involuntary, and, perhaps, the most sincere tribute to our superiority, our success, our power, our wealth, our information, our character, and our virtues; but among its causes, we are sorry to include the language which has been used, and the tone which has been adopted by a party in this country, who, if they were desirous of renewing the contest, could not adopt a more effectual mode than the line of conduct which they have pursued. Their speeches are widely circulated and greedily read by the haters of this country; and those repeated assertions of our ruin, that England's arm is palsied, and her heart no longer the same,—that we are in such internal distress as to be unable to make any further effort to defend the high pre-eminence which, under Providence, we have attained, are in fact so many baits to invite attack, and offer a sort of premium to insult. The memories of these gentlemen are not to be envied. Its pleasures are to them unknown.—If there is a possibility of referring to former disasters and unavoidable misfortunes, there is nothing so correct as their recollec-

tions; if there is an analogy to be drawn between a dismal portrait of former years and the aspect of the present, it is never omitted; but there is another sort of retrospect on which they never dwell, but from which they might derive more consolation and advantage—the retrospect of our glorious career; in that may be discovered, under difficulties much more imminent than any which now threaten us, the most ample sources of comfort,—how the ruin which was predicted by our prophets of evil was prevented by loyalty and perseverance, and how the dangers, so often declared to be fatal, were surmounted by the spirit of the nation which even their dismal prophecies could never quench.—This is the real use of memory, not to cloud the future path, but to cheer it with the light of former examples; not to unnerve our arms and chill our hearts, but to strengthen and animate them by the remembrance of our triumphs.

That the political horizon of Europe is not serene I allow, that the events which have occurred in France are menacing I admit,—but there is no reason to despair of the preservation of peace or the security of Europe, if that firm union and cordial co-operation among the Allies are maintained which rescued her before. But for that to exist, England must not be

wanting to herself—for to inspire confidence in others, we must feel it first. It is our duty to remain in an attitude of preparation, on the principles of real and ultimate economy, as well as for our safety. In politics as well as mechanics, a small force will keep a body in motion when no power we possess could move it from its base. A system of just rational economy is demanded by all, but let us guard against visionary and false retrenchments which keep the promise to our ear and break it to our hopes; which, whilst it appears to be pruning the luxuriance of our suckers, is cutting the vital sinews of our strength, and which is at the end the most pernicious prodigality; and the true friends of peace earnestly hope that those ministers under whose guidance this country has preserved herself and liberated Europe, will not allow any cry of the moment, or the influence of party, to prevent England from retaining a situation in which her voice may command respect, and her interference, if again unhappily required, may be as effectual as before.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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